

TOP SECRET

Chrono

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25 April 1973

MEMORANDUM FOR:

Chief, Reconnaissance Group, IRS
Chief, Regional Studies Division, IAS
Chief, Cartography Division, OBG
Chief, Far East Division, OCI
Chief, South East Asia Division, OER
Chief, Regional Analysis Division, OSR
Chief, Imagery Exploitation Group, NPIC
Chairman, ICRS
Chairman, EXSUBCOM
Deputy Director, Satellite Operations Center
Special Assistant for Vietnamese Affairs
DIA Member, ICRS
DIA Member, EXSUBCOM

SUBJECT : Coordinating the Collection and Exploitation
of Photographic Coverage of Indochina

REFERENCE : USIB-D-46.4/52 (COMIREX-D-26.11/2),
29 March 1973, TOP SECRET,
Limited Distribution

1. The memorandum referenced above contains the national-level guidance and requirements for collection and exploitation of overhead photography of Indochina. This guidance has been noted by USIB and forwarded to the appropriate organizations for implementation.

2. Of necessity, the USIB guidance is generalized. It is designed to insure the provision of a flow of information that meets the Intelligence Community's minimum needs for imagery-derived information while at the same time taking account of collection limitations imposed by system characteristics, flight path restrictions, and weather. Built into the program is considerable flexibility that can be used to make the collection effort more responsive to day-to-day needs than would be the case if collection were tasked solely against the delineated standing requirements. Full utilization of the flexibility can only be achieved if there is good communication and close coordination among the participating collection, exploitation, and analytical elements.

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3. As a first step toward improving communication and coordination, the COMIREX Staff is hosting a meeting of representatives of the organizations involved at 1330 on 7 May in Room 4 F 21, CIA Headquarters. The security level at this meeting will be SI/T-KH. Participants are invited to raise questions about or comment on the program as it has unfolded since January, but it would seem most useful to concentrate on the record for the most recent month, April. Participants should be prepared to address the following questions that already have been raised:

For DIA, OER, OCI, SAVA, OSR: Has the flow of coverage provided in April met minimum information needs? If not, in what areas has it been most deficient? To what extent has the coverage provided by KH [] satisfied the needs for coverage of China and the non-coastal regions of North Vietnam? Are there cases in which the provision of imagery-derived information has not been timely enough to be useful? To what extent have the collection assets been able to satisfy special tasking needs? What targets are most critically in need of coverage on the forthcoming []? Are any area and target coverage needs amenable to statistical sampling techniques? If not, why?

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For OBGI and ICRS: What is the status of satisfaction of the requirements as of the end of April? What are the intervals between collection with airborne assets and incorporation of the results in the data banks? Please bring along a list of special taskings served on collectors through ICRS during April. What was the record of satisfaction of these special requirements? How often and to whom is target and area coverage information disseminated? OBGI, please provide samples of area and target coverage maps and indicate how frequently such maps can reasonably be prepared and disseminated.

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For NPIC, DIA, IAS: Are the exploitation requirements now outstanding satisfactory in terms of completeness and detail? Have there been delays in the provision of film from airborne missions? Are there ways in which quick-look reporting from field elements could be sharpened? What is the value of full-color photography relative to black/white? of camouflage-detection photography relative to black/white? How reliable and consistent is reporting on whether a particular road is being lightly, moderately, or heavily used? What kinds of records are maintained on traffic flows and on presence of vehicles at logistics targets?

For NRO AND DIA: Do further changes appear feasible with regard to aircraft flight paths? How did the weather encountered in April compare with the weather predicted from climatology? What is the weather outlook for the May-July period? Will the expected weather allow satisfaction of the standing requirements? If deficiencies are probable, where are they most likely to be? Is special tasking levied by the Intelligence Community satisfactory as regards timeliness and detail? What are the most important respects in which departmental coverage needs differ from those levied through COMIREX? What fraction of the low-level tactical collection is flown against COMIREX-levied requirements? What is the availability of full-color and film, and on which systems can each be flown at present?

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COMIREX Staff

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